

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
NEEDLES FIELD OFFICE
CAPTURE PLAN FOR WILD BURROS
FOR THE
CLARK MOUNTAIN HERD AREA
FISCAL YEARS 2006 - 2011**

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this capture plan is to outline the objectives, methods and procedures for the removal of wild burros from the Clark Mountain Herd Area (HA).

Wild burros in the Mojave Desert are thought to have escaped from, or been turned loose by, early prospectors and settlers over 100 years ago. They have relatively high reproductive rates, few natural predators and low incidence of disease. As time passed they multiplied to the point that they were out competing native wildlife and overgrazing rangelands. Throughout the western United States, it became increasingly apparent that detrimental impacts exerted by uncontrolled populations of wild burros upon soils, native plant and animal communities, water and cultural resources degraded the natural environmental quality of arid land ecosystems.

Congress recognized the issues and established the parameters for management through the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of December 15, 1971, (PL 92-195) 16 U.S.C. 1331-1340 (Act) as amended by The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (PL 94-579), The Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 (PL 95-514) and Public Law 108-447. The regulations found at 43 CFR Part 4700 and the 4700 BLM Manual series, prescribe the authorities, objectives, and policies that guide the protection, management, control, and disposition of wild free-roaming horses and burros in accordance with the Act.

The Act defined Herd Areas (HAs) as the geographic area identified as having been used by a herd of burros or horses as its habitat at the time the Act was passed in 1971. A Herd Management Area (HMA) is a land use planning decision establishing within the herd area, an area for the management and establishment of an appropriate management level of wild horses and/or burros. A decision may be made through resource management planning not to manage wild horses and burros in a herd area because of resource problems or conflicts. These areas would still be recognized as herd areas, but are to be managed for other resources to the exclusion of wild horses and burros.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 1980 California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, designated the western portion of the Clark Mountain HA as a herd management area (HMA) for the management for 44 burros. The Record of Decision for the 2002, Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Coordinated Management (NEMO) Plan, amended the 1980 CDCA Plan and eliminated the Clark Mountain Herd Management Area for the management of burros due to two factors:

1. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated the desert tortoise as a threatened species in 1990 (55 FR 12178) and an endangered species in 1992. The 1994 USFWS Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan recommended that grazing by feral (“wild”) burros be prohibited throughout Desert Wildlife Management Areas. The western portion of the herd area contains critical desert tortoise habitat. The Record of Decision for the NEMO Plan eliminated the Clark Mountain Herd Management Area for wild burros in the Ivanpah DWMA and adjusted the Appropriate Management Level (AML) from 44 to 0 throughout the herd area to provide for recovery of the desert tortoise.
2. The 1994 California Desert Protection Act transferred the Clark Mountain proper (37,000 acres), to the National Park Service in the creation of the Mojave National Preserve. This transferred the only springs which had yearlong surface water to the National Park Service. The burros in this area are dependant upon those springs for their survival. The National Park Service's General Management Plan for the area prescribes complete removal of burros from the Mojave National preserve, and if the BLM was to maintain an HMA, the NPS would fence their boundary to preclude burros from access, thus their ability to get water.

II. MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management's, 2002 Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Coordinated Management Plan, amended the 1980 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, which eliminated the 75,349 acre HMA and reduced the management level from 44 burros down to zero. There is a current estimate of 100-150 burros within and adjacent to the herd area. These burros will be removed and placed into the BLM's National Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Program as amended by Public Law 108-447, which directs the BLM to sell “without limitation” animals that are more than 10 years old or that have been passed over for adoption at least three times.

III. CLARK MOUNTAIN HERD AREA DESCRIPTION (See Vicinity Map 1)

1. General:

The Clark Mountain Herd Area (233,410 acres) located in Southern California in the upper eastern portion of San Bernardino County is under the jurisdiction of the Needles, California BLM Field Office. It encompasses the area just north of the recently established Mojave National Preserve, north of Interstate 15 from the town of Baker to the Nevada/California State line and extends to the north to Mesquite Dry Lake. The Clark Mountain proper (37,270 acres) is now within the National Park Service's Mojave National Preserve.

2.Climate:

Summer temperatures may reach 125 degrees Fahrenheit and there are approximately 100 days per year with temperatures above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The area receives an average of about 3 to 6 inches of precipitation annually. Approximately 60 percent of the precipitation occurs during the winter season. The remaining precipitation occurs as short duration, high intensity, summer convectional thunderstorms.

3. Topography:

This region is characterized by broad sloping desert plains with rough, sharply eroded desert mountain ranges and abrupt ridge lines leading into various drainages. The elevation ranges from 800 feet in elevation from the Ivanpah and Mesquite dry lakes and valley regions to 2,417 feet at Clark Mountain.

4. Wilderness Areas:

- A. Kingston Range Wilderness Area
- B. Mesquite Wilderness Area
- C. Stateline Wilderness Area

5. Vegetation:

In the upper elevations, there are stands of riparian woodland including honey mesquite (*Prosopis juliflora*), screwbean mesquite (*P. Pubescens*), Gooding willow (*Salix goodingii*), and Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*).

The dominant perennial vegetation includes the following species: Black Gramma (Boer), Galleta Grass (Hija), Sand dropseed (Spcr), Bush Muhly (Mupo), Squirreltail (SiHy), Indian Ricegrass (Orhy), Blue Gramma (Hiri), Filiree (Erci), Schsmis (Scba) Red Brome (Brru), Mormon Tea (Epne), Range Ratany (KrpA), Spiny Menodora (Mesp), Winterfat (Cela) Cheesebush (Hysa), Creosote (Latr), Silver Cholla (Opec), Bursage or Burro Bush (Amdu).

6. Wildlife / T&E Species:

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) is listed as threatened by both the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG).

The desert bighorn sheep is a BLM sensitive species and is fully protected by the State of California. Nelson's bighorn sheep utilize the areas in and around Clark Mountain.

Mule deer also reside within the herd area.

Small mammals of this area include cottontail rabbits and black-tailed jackrabbits. The antelope ground squirrel, round-tailed ground squirrel, and several species of pocket mice are also common.

The kangaroo rat is found in the more sandy areas. Predators of the area include coyotes, foxes, bobcats, skunks, badgers, ringtail cats and an occasional mountain lion. Bats such as Townsends' big-eared bat and the big brown bat can be found in most parts of the area and congregate in caves and abandoned mines.

Avian species of the area include mourning dove, white wing dove and Gamble's quail. There is also been sightings of red-tailed hawks.

IV. PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to comply with Federal Statutes and the management prescriptions within the 2002, Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Coordinated Management Plan amending the 1980 CDCA Plan.

The Bureau of Land Management proposes to gather and remove all wild burros encountered in the Clark Mountain Herd Area and adjacent areas, including burros on public land south of Mountain Pass utilizing live capture removal methods. Water/bait trapping and/or helicopter assisted gather and removal methods shall be used to meet removal objectives. The removal methods can either be BLM in house, BLM contracted or BLM Cooperative Agreements with the National Park Service or other parties in completing the gather operations.

The removed burros will be transported to the BLM's Ridgecrest, California Wild Horse and Burro Holding and Adoption Facility where they will be placed into the BLM's National Adoption Program. The health and welfare of all the animals will be given the highest priority.

Burro removals may be conducted at any time within the next five years to move towards the management level of zero burros. This action will be on going until objectives are met or changes in land use decisions require a re-evaluation of this capture plan. The first phase of this operation is planned to begin sometime after January 19, 2007. This capture plan shall stay in effect until the end of Fiscal Year 2012 when it shall be re-evaluated for adequacy and for any required updates.

IV. JUSTIFICATION

The proposed removals are in accordance with the:

- Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-195)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579)
- Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-514)
- Codes of Federal Regulations (43 CFR 4700 - Protection, Management, and Control of Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros)
- California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Resource Management Plan of 1980 as amended

through the Northern and Easter Mojave Desert Coordinated Management Plan of 2002.

V. OPERATING MEASURES

A. Area of Critical Environmental Concern:

No off road travel by vehicles in these areas is permitted.

B. Air Quality:

1. Continue to following applicable state and federal guidelines i.e. reasonably available control measures (RACM) to control PM-10 emissions from unpaved roads including the following:

Source category	Control Measure
Unpaved road	Control vehicular traffic speed (20 MPH on dirt roads)

2. Use water as necessary to limit fugitive dust blowing off the site during the work if fugitive emissions exceed state and/or GBUAPCD standards.
3. Curtail activities when wind speeds exceed 30 MPH.

C. Cultural Resources:

All impact areas associated with the gather will be targeted for previously disturbed areas. However, when gathering activities on BLM administered lands cannot be confined to previous disturbance, a BLM archaeologist will examine the proposed gather site to ensure that no cultural resources are present. If cultural resources are identified within a proposed gather site, an alternate gather site will be selected.

D. Surface Hydrology:

Do not allow discharge of oil or other petroleum products on site.

E. Wildlife Protection:

Each proposed capture site within desert tortoise habitat will be inventoried by a biologist or designated BLM representative who has done field work with desert tortoises for tortoise burrows. Temporary structures, vehicles, equipment, helicopter landing sites and other activity shall be located in areas free of tortoise burrows, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. One member of the team conducting the gather shall be responsible for overseeing compliance with protective stipulations for the desert tortoise and for coordination on compliance. This

individual shall have the authority to halt all activities that are in violation of the stipulations. The person may be a BLM employee.

2. The gather crew shall be aware of the following types of information concerning the desert tortoise:

- general behavior and ecology of the tortoise
- sensitivity to human activities
- legal protection
- penalties for violations of State or Federal laws
- reporting requirements
- project protective mitigation measures

The crew may contact the BLM biologists for clarification and additional information.

3. Only individuals authorized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shall handle desert tortoises.
4. The area of disturbance shall be confined to the smallest practical area, considering topography, placement of facilities, locations of burrows, public health and safety, and other limiting factors. To the extent possible, previously disturbed areas within the site shall be utilized. The project lead shall ensure compliance with this measure.
5. Upon locating a dead or injured tortoise, the gather crew is to notify the Ridgecrest Office. The BLM must then notify the appropriate field office (Carlsbad or Ventura) of USFWS by telephone within three days of the finding.
6. No dogs shall be allowed on site during the operation.
7. All trash and food items shall be promptly contained within closed, raven-proof containers. These shall be regularly removed from the project site to reduce the attractiveness of the area to ravens and other tortoise predators.

F. Wilderness:

No trap sites, temporary corrals, helicopter landings or ground motorized vehicle travel would occur within any wilderness. Trap sites and temporary corrals along wilderness boundaries will be confined within the boundary roads themselves, cherrystems or areas otherwise excluded from wilderness and the following:

1. Advise helicopter pilot of location of wilderness boundaries and provide with map.
2. Minimize helicopter use over wilderness.
3. Prohibit motorized vehicle travel or helicopter landings in wilderness, except for emergencies as authorized under BLM regulations and policy.

V. CAPTURE SITES

Several sites will be needed to gather the wild burros from the HA. Each site will be selected based on the location of the animals and how the topography of the area can best be used to implement helicopter assisted gathers or vehicle access to set up water/bait traps. In general, capture sites will be located in areas that have been previously disturbed to cause as little damage to the natural resources as possible. Typically, temporary holding corral sites will be located on and adjacent to existing roadways, exceptions may be when they are placed in a wash or on a dry lake bed. No corral shall be set up in a Wilderness or WSA. Boundary roads, cherry stems and areas excluded from wilderness or WSA's will be suitable to set trap sites and temporary corrals. Cherry stems are existing roads open for vehicle traffic that borders a WSA. Special care will be taken to minimize disturbance to resource values in gather areas.

In addition to the sites pre-selected for temporary traps, up to five additional sites may be utilized as the gather is taking place. The additional temporary sites may need to be selected if: 1) burros are located too far from (more than 5 miles) the pre-selected sites, 2) the helicopter cannot maneuver the burros to the pre-selected sites 3) burros are located in areas not previously known to be inhabited by burros, 4) the terrain is too rugged for burros to safely travel to pre-selected sites, 5) unforeseen hazards to the helicopter and/or ground crew are located at the pre-selected sites, and 6) in the event that the burros safety would be in jeopardy due to illness, injury, age animal, etc. The sites would be located on public land and would be assessed to establish that they present no conflict with other permitted uses and present no safety concerns. The five potential sites would not be used until the authorized Biologist and Archaeologist have surveyed and determined that no impacts to natural and cultural resource values would occur in association with the use of the site.

POTENTIAL CAPTURE SITE LOCATIONS (See Attached Map)

Map ID	Township	Range	Section
T1	17N	14E	13
T2	17N	14E	13
T3	17N	14E	14
T4	17N	14E	12
T5	17N	14E	23
T6	17N	14E	35
T7	16N	14E	31
T8	15 1/2N	14E	18
T9	15 1/2N	14E	19
T10	15 1/2N	14E	19
T11	15 1/2N	14E	19
T12	16N	12 1/2E	13
T13	16N	12 1/2E	13
T14	16N	12E	22
T15	16N	12E	22
T16	16N	12E	22
T17	16N	11E	24
T18	15N	11E	2
T19	15N	10E	2
T20	15N	10E	14
T21	16N	10E	24
T22	16N	10E	21
T23	17N	11E	32

T24	17N	11E	35
T25	17N	11E	24
C1	18 1/2N	12 1/2E	1
C2	18N	13E	8
C3	18N	13E	23
C4	17N	15E	7
C5	17N	15E	24
C6	16N	14E	11
C7	17N	15E	18
C8	17N	12E	17
C9	16N	12E	18
C10	16N	10E	24

VI. METHODS OF CAPTURE

All capture attempts shall be accomplished utilizing either (1) helicopter - drive trapping, (2) helicopter - roping methods or (3) bait/water trapping.

Heavy trucks pulling stock trailers will be necessary to transport panels, saddle horses and the captured animals, thus trapping locations will be limited to those areas where suitable access exists. Temporary capture corral sites will be located on and adjacent to existing roadways and designated routes of travel. No corral shall be set up in a BLM Wilderness or WSA. Boundary roads, cherry stems and areas excluded from wilderness or WSAs will be suitable to set trap sites and temporary corrals. The trap and related structures will be installed by hand using hand tools and will be removed upon completion of the gather in the area. A new site may then be set up according to the location of any other herds. If vehicle traffic needs access through the trap when it is positioned in the road or if the trap is going to be left over night, the end panels or jute netting will be removed. The corral will be removed after the completion of the gather in the area. A new site may then be set up according to the location of any other animals.

Saddle horses not being used during the capture will be kept tied to or left inside of the horse trailer during the round-up. A portable loading chute with solid sides will be used if captured animals are loaded onto semi-trailers. The captured animals would receive water and feed according to their needs. Handling of the animals would be kept to a minimum in order to avoid traumatizing the animals as much as possible.

1. Helicopter Assisted Gathers:

The proposed activities include the use of a helicopter, wranglers on horseback, temporary trap panels to hold the wild burros. The helicopter is used to locate and herd the targeted animals to the capture site and assist the wranglers in capturing the animals. No helicopter landings will occur in BLM or NPS designated wilderness or wilderness study areas.

It is expected that the number of animals herded will vary from 1 to 20 head. All attempts will be made to move and keep the band together. Rate of movement and distance the animals travel will be based on the condition of animals, terrain, physical barriers and weather. Should any animal become

fatigued or undue stress is noted, the pilot will break off pursuit, so the animal(s) may rest and recover.

Each area will be flown prior to the start of the roundup to locate the animals, study the terrain and locate any hazards to the burros while being herded (fences, cliffs, etc.). The helicopter would normally fly at heights from ground level to 500 feet. It would drop as low as 5 or 6 feet when turning the animals. Refueling would involve one fuel truck, which would be restricted to existing roads. Refueling would occur on flat, previously disturbed areas.

A. Drive Trapping:

Run traps for the helicopter - drive trapping method will have two temporary wing extensions posed at 45 to 90 degree angles from two sides of the corral. A wing extension consists of 6 feet high jute netting supported by steel tee-posts spaced approximately 15 to 20 feet apart for a distance as needed. The jute provides a visible barrier that aids in herding the animals to the trap corral. Run traps are usually placed in arroyos or immediately over the crest of a hill where the corral extensions are easily disguised or not easily seen. Once a group of animals is herded into the trap corral, a gate is closed and the capture is complete.

Foals and mothers occasionally become separated or escape during gathering process. The escaped mother or foal would be roped to keep the foal from being orphaned.

All traps and wings shall be constructed, maintained and operated to handle the animals in a safe and humane manner and be in accordance with the following:

1. Traps and holding facilities shall be constructed of portable panels, the top of which shall not be less than 60 inches for burros, and the bottom rail of which shall not be more than 12 inches from ground level. All traps and holding facilities shall be oval or round in design. The dimensions of the corral will vary with the topography and the dimensions of the road.
2. All loading chute sides shall be fully covered with plywood (without holes) or like material. The loading chute shall also be a minimum of 6 feet high.
3. All runways shall be a minimum of 30 feet long and 5 feet high for burros, and shall be covered with plywood, burlap, plastic snow fence or like material a minimum of 1 foot to 5 feet above ground level for burros and 1 foot to 6 feet for horses.
4. Wings shall not be constructed out of barbed wire or other materials injurious to animals and must be approved by the PI. Wings may be constructed along existing fence lines, at the discretion of the PI, only if the barbed wire or other wire fencing material is removed from the fence posts and laid on the ground for the length of the wing, or if portable panels are placed along the inside of the fence to protect the animals from injury from fence wire.
5. All crowding pens including the gates leading to the runways shall be covered with a

material that prevents the animals from seeing out (plywood, burlap, etc.) and shall be covered a minimum of 1 foot to 5 feet above ground level for burros. Eight linear feet of this material shall be capable of being removed or let down to provide a viewing window.

6. All pens and runways used for the movement and handling of animals shall be connected with hinged self-locking gates.

B. Roping

The helicopter - roping method involves the helicopter to herd the wild animals to the wranglers on horseback. The wranglers will be positioned out of view from the on coming animals and in an area that allows the wranglers to maneuver their horses when giving chase. The helicopter will bring the main herd to a holding area and will break off a smaller set of animals that the wranglers can manage. These animals are herded to the capture area. The wranglers will give chase, rope by lassoing the animal around the neck and leading the captured animal into the corral. The corral consists of a 10 foot panel tied to each side of the trailer and a swing gate, additional panels are added to make a round pen about 20-25 feet in diameter with a gate. The burro is lead into the round pen and the rope is removed from its neck. The burro is then moved into the smaller pen and placed into the trailer. This is repeated until all the targeted animals are captured.

2. Bait / Water Trapping:

The BLM and the Lessee of the Clark Mountain and Valley Wells allotments may work together to water/bait trap burros in order to remove excess burros from the Clark Mountain HA.

A. Bait Trapping

The trap site would be located on active trails where suitable vehicle access exists. Trap sites would be located on previously disturbed ground. Hay is placed on the trails for the burros to become familiar with that food source. Portable panels are placed around the area where the burros come to feed on the hay. The trapping area will be approximately 40 feet by 40 feet. The trigger gate would be left open until burros are not afraid of coming into the trap. Once the trigger gate is set, the traps will be checked daily for any trapped animals. Trapped burros will be moved to a designated holding area. In the case that other animals are trapped besides burros, the burros will be sorted. If it is not possible to sort without harming the animals, the trigger gate will be opened allowing the animals to escape. When the traps are not in service, the trap gates will be locked open.

The related structures will be installed by hand using hand tools and will be removed upon completion of the gather in the area. Trapping operations would probably extend from a few weeks to several months.

B. Water Trapping

Water trapping involves the following: **1)** excluding burros at waters where no trap is set, and **2)** setting a one way gate (trigger) at watering site(s). Bait trapping is similar except hay is placed in the trap as bait.

It would involve the use of existing corrals and when needed temporary corrals or devises to trap or limit animal access to water. The temporary corral or devises required for each specific project will be address in short environmental assessments tiered off this document. Temporary corrals designed to limit burro access to waters of prime importance to deer will be at least 60 foot long on a side and not over 60 inches tall at any point with opposite sections 42 inches or less in height for escape, while those for bighorn sheep will have several bighorn sheep panels per corral to allow sheep access to the water while excluding burros.

Lessee must work under a current cooperative agreement for burro removal and can only trap burros within their allotment. Lessee(s) would be required to work under the guidelines of a cooperative agreement for burro removal.

Traps

The corrals used to trap burros will contain adequate water and fencing. There will be no exposed barbed wire in any of the corral facilities. Any objects potentially injurious to the animals will be removed or made safe. Water troughs are located inside each corral. The corrals that are used to trap burros will be temporarily modified using portable steel pipe panels (5 feet high) that are self

supporting to divide the corral into a trapping area and a holding area. The dimensions of the trap and holding areas will vary with the dimensions of the corral. Both areas are designed so that animals have access to water. This area will be constructed entirely within existing disturbance. No new surface disturbances would occur. The trapping area consists of placing a finger trigger gate at the entrance way of the corral. This allows the animals to enter to drink, but not exit. The size of the trap area will be approximately 400 square feet, but will vary with the size of corral. A swing gate will be placed between the holding area and the trap area so that trapped burros can be moved into the holding pen. The holding area will be approximately 40 feet by 40 feet. The traps will be checked daily for any trapped animals. Trapped burros will be moved to the holding area. In the case that other animals are trapped besides burros, the burros will be sorted into the holding area, if this can be done without harming any animals. If it is not possible to sort without harming animals, the trigger gate will be opened allowing the animals to escape. The BLM plans to load and transport the burros within 48 hours of being notified of capture. If the holding facility becomes too crowded, the trigger gate will be locked open, until extra panels are set up to expand the holding facility or until the animals are removed. If the burros are to be transported by truck and trailer by the Lessee to a holding corral, the Lessee will notify the BLM prior to such action. The holding corral must meet the same standards of the capture corral. The Lessee will feed good quality grass/alfalfa hay, supplied by the BLM, to the captured burros.

The related structures will be installed by hand using hand tools and will be removed upon completion of the gather in the area. A new site may then be set up according to the location of any other herds. When the traps are not in service, the trap gates will be locked open.

Limiting Burro Access To Other Available Water Sources

The other existing water sources may be closed off to burros. This may include turning off the water to troughs, closing corrals, or temporarily placing portable panels or steel fence posts around water sites and running one to three strands of wire between them and then attaching flags to the wire. The flags flapping in the breeze repel burros from the watering area. The temporary fence would be as small as practical. Water sites that are fenced off are generally difficult to access with stock trailers or are located where setting up traps would result in new disturbance. The temporary barriers at waters of prime importance to deer will be at least 60 foot long on a side and not over 60 inches tall at any point with opposite sections 42 inches or less in height for escape. Those barriers around bighorn sheep waters will include several bighorn sheep panels to allow sheep access to the water, while excluding burros. The disturbance would be temporary in nature and consist of steel fence post holes in sand. The related structures will be installed by hand using hand tools and will be removed upon completion of the gather in the area.

VII. TRANSPORTING AND SORTING

Horse trailers pulled by heavy duty four wheel drive trucks will be necessary to transport the materials and captured animals, thus trapping locations will be limited to those areas where suitable access exists. All vehicular access would be by existing routes.

Captured burros will be counted as they are loaded into the horse trailer. Jennies and foals will

be kept as pairs, jacks will be kept separate from pairs, and when practical, jennies and jacks will be kept separate.

All burros removed will be transported to the Ridgecrest Corrals by BLM personnel. Captured burros are very sensitive to people. Because of this, the number of team members to handle the animals shall be limited to essential personnel to alleviate stress on the animals. Handling of the animals would be kept to a minimum in order to avoid traumatizing the animals any more than necessary. A veterinarian will be on call at all times. The number of animals will be counted as they come off the trailer. The first consideration after unloading will be to determine which animals, if any, need special attention for injuries, illnesses or any other problems requiring prompt attention. Any orphans shall be separated and provisions made to feed and care for them. The jacks will be separated from the pairs and jennies.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

It will be the responsibility of the wrangler crew leader to approve all trap locations and to assure that the capture is being conducted in accordance with applicable regulations; BLM policy; in accordance with the Environmental Assessment, Decision Record and the California Desert Conservation Area Plan. The wranglers will insure that the animals are humanely treated during the capture operation, sorting, loading and hauling; work in a safe manner; observe the guidelines set forth in the capture plan and; determine if euthanization of any sick or injured animals is necessary during the gather.

IX. INJURIES AND DISEASE

For injuries and disease not requiring the immediate care of a veterinarian, the animal will be transported to the Ridgecrest or Kingman Corrals where the animal will be treated upon arrival. If the animal cannot be transported, or if it is uncertain if the animal can't be transported to the corral facility without further injury, harm or undue pain, a contracted veterinarian for the wild horse and burro program will be available upon request.

X. DESTRUCTION OF INJURED OR SICK ANIMALS

Any severely injured or sick animal shall be destroyed in accordance to 43 CFR 4740.31. This regulation states: animals shall be destroyed only when a definite act of mercy is needed to alleviate pain and suffering. When it is unsure as to the severity of an injury or sickness, a veterinarian will make a final determination. Destruction shall be done in the most humane method available.

XI. SAFETY

All capturing and handling of the animals shall be done in the safest manner possible for the wild animal, personnel and saddle horses. All Aircraft Safety and communication procedures outlined in the California Desert District Wild Horse and Burro Aviation Safety Plan will be adhered to for BLM in house gathers.